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DRAMA 567

other world, a system of mystic and cathartic rites, which cleared men of ritual uncleanness, purified them, and "saved" them. The cathartic rites were a means of warding off evil spirits and did the work of the old shamans.¹ The sectarian brotherhood of the initiated, the "church," the faith, the contrast of ordinary life with the ecstatic emotions of the mysteries, the consequent antagonism of the "flesh" or the "world," and the "spirit," were easy deductions from the teaching and ritual of the sects.² It was all concentrated in the godlikeness, divinity, or immortality of the human soul, with the mystic notions of union between the soul and God. "Mysticism, as doctrine and theory, grew up from the soil of a more ancient practice in worship." "The worship of Dionysus must have furnished the first germ of the belief in the immortality of the soul." ³ The idea of the Orphic mysteries was that humanity is suffering and sinful, and must be initiated in order to wash away its stains and be redeemed from its sins. Initiation puts a man in communication with the divinity. The soul is raised by ecstasy to feel its own divinity, which is the deepest element in all mystic religion. In all this compound of rites and notions the great antecedent philosophy was not the same as ours. It was demonism, superstitious anxiety about the world of demons, who floated around men and stretched their hands out of the surrounding darkness to seize them. It was from these that men wanted to be "saved." Atonement was to be made to the chthonic gods, for they were displeased at ritual uncleanness, and the chthonic cults had the other world in view.⁴ The uncleanness was ritual, and hence it came

from anything far
out of the regular order, either by abomination or
holiness. The
rabbis held that the handling of the Scriptures
defiled the hands
and called for ceremonial washing (Num. xix. 8,
io).⁵

622. Combination of religion and drama.
Syncretism. The
interest of all this for our present purpose is the
combination of
religious ideas with dramatic representation.
Processions of all
kinds easily turn into such representations. Rites
and ceremonies

¹ Rohde, *Psyche*, II, 70.

² *Ibid.*, 34.

³ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁴ Wobbermin, *Uebeeinflussung des Urchristenthums durch das
Mysterienwesen*, 21

⁵ W. R. Smith, *Relig. of the Semites*, 426. See sec. 565.